

§ 706.15 Where to file.

(a) Each Office employee shall file his or her statement of employment and financial interests with the Director.

(b) Each Department of the Interior employee, who is not an Office employee but does perform any function or duty under the Act, shall file a statement of employment and financial interests with his or her appropriate Ethics Counselor as identified in 43 CFR 20.735–22(c).

(c) Each employee of another Federal agency who performs a function or duty under the Act shall file a statement of employment and financial interests with the official designated by the Head of the other Federal agency.

§ 706.17 What to report.

(a) Each employee shall report all information required on the statement of employment and financial interests of the employee, his or her spouse, minor children, or other relatives who are fulltime residents of the employee's home. The report shall be on a form provided by the Office or on a similar form adopted by another Federal agency. The statement shall consist of three major parts, (1) a listing of all financial interests, including employment, security, real property, creditor and other financial interests held during the course of the preceding year, (2) a certification that none of the listed financial interests represent a direct or indirect financial interest in an underground or surface coal mining operation except as specifically identified and described by the employee as part of the certificate, and (3) a certification by the reviewer that the form was reviewed, that prohibited interests have been resolved, and that no other prohibited interests have been identified from the statement.

(b) Listing of all financial interests. The statement will set forth the following information regarding any financial interest:

(1) *Employment.* Any continuing financial interests in business entities and nonprofit organizations through a pension or retirement plan, shared income, salary or other income arrangement as a result of prior or current employment. The employee, his or her spouse or other resident relative is not

required to report a statement plan from which he or she will receive a guaranteed income. A guaranteed income is one which is unlikely to be changed as a result of actions taken by the Federal Government under the Act.

(2) *Securities.* Any financial interest in business entities and nonprofit organizations through ownership of stock, stock options, bonds, securities or other arrangements including trusts. An employee is not required to report holdings in widely diversified mutual funds, investment clubs or regulated investment companies not specializing in underground and surface coal mining operations.

(3) *Real property.* Ownership, lease, royalty or other interests or rights in lands or minerals. Employees are not required to report lands developed and occupied for a personal residence.

(4) *Creditors.* Debts owed to business entities and nonprofit organizations. Employees are not required to report debts owed to financial institutions (banks, savings and loan associations, credit unions, and the like) which are chartered to provide commercial or personal credit. Also excluded are charge accounts and similar short term debts for current and ordinary household and living expenses.

(c) Employee certification, and if applicable, a listing of exceptions.

(1) The statement will provide for a signed certification by the employee that to the best of his or her knowledge, (i) none of the listed financial interests represent an interest in an underground or surface coal mining operation except as specifically identified and described as exceptions by the employee as part of the certificate, and (ii) the information shown on the statement is true, correct, and complete.

(2) An employee is expected to (i) have complete knowledge of his or her personal involvement in business enterprises such as a sole proprietorship and partnership, his or her outside employment and the outside employment of the spouse and other covered relatives, and (ii) be aware of the information contained in the annual financial

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statements or other corporate or business reports routinely circulated to investors or routinely made available to the public.

(3) The exceptions shown in the employee certification of the form must provide enough information for the Director, the Head of another Federal agency, or the Head of other bureaus or offices within the U.S. Department of the Interior to determine the existence of a direct or indirect financial interest. Accordingly, the exceptions should:

- (i) List the financial interests;
 - (ii) Show the number of shares, estimated value or annual income of the financial interests; and
 - (iii) Include any other information which the employee believes should be considered in determining whether or not the interest represents a prohibited interest.
- (4) Employees are cautioned to give serious consideration to their direct and indirect financial interests before signing the statement of certification. Signing the certification without listing known prohibited financial interests may be cause for imposing the penalties prescribed in § 706.6(a).

§ 706.18 Gifts and gratuities.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, employees shall not solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, any gift, gratuity, favor, entertainment, loan, or any other thing of monetary value, from a coal company which:

(1) Conducts or is seeking to conduct operations or activities that are regulated by the Federal Government; or

(2) Has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's official duty.

(b) The prohibitions in paragraph (a) of this section do not apply in the context of obvious family or personal relationships, such as those between the parents, children, or spouse of the employee and the employee, when the circumstances make it clear that it is those relationships rather than the business of the persons concerned which are the motivating factors. An employee may accept:

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(1) Food and refreshments of nominal value on infrequent occasions in the ordinary course of a luncheon, dinner, or other meeting where an employee may properly be in attendance, and

(2) Unsolicited advertising or promotional material, such as pens, pencils, note pads, calendars and other items of nominal value.

(c) Employees found guilty of violating the provisions of this section will be subject to administrative remedies in accordance with existing Federal regulations or policies.

§ 706.19 Resolving prohibited interests.

Actions to be taken by the Director, the heads of other Federal agencies, and the heads of other affected bureaus and offices within the U.S. Department of the Interior include:

(a) Remedial action to effect resolution. If an employee has a prohibited financial interest, the head of the organizational entity (Department, bureau, office, etc.) where the employee works shall promptly advise the employee that remedial action which will resolve the prohibited interest is required within 90 days.

(b) Remedial action may include: (1) Reassignment of the employee to a position which performs no function or duty under the Act, or

(2) Divestiture of the prohibited financial interest, or

(3) Other appropriate action which either eliminates the prohibited financial interest or eliminates the situation which creates the conflict.

(c) Reports of noncompliance. If 90 days after an employee is notified to take remedial action that employee is not in compliance with the requirements of the Act and these regulations, the official, other than the Director, who ordered the remedial action shall promptly report the facts of the situation to the Director. The reports to the Director shall include the original or a certified true copy of the employee's statement and any other information pertinent to the Director, including a statement of actions being taken at the time the report is made. Within 30 days of receipt of a noncompliance report, the Director shall notify the head of the employing organization and the employee involved of additional action